



SSgt. Rickey Sweatt (right), traffic management office quality inspector, briefs Lt. Col. William Gillespie, 48th Dental Squadron, on his moving entitlements.

Photo by SSgt. Steve Ball

Inside:

- General information to help make a PCS move easier
- Tips for shipping your personal vehicle
- Countdown checklist to moving day

Starting early, asking questions keys to a successful PCS move

By Brent Ruddell
"Jet 48" correspondent

With spring and summer approaching comes a bustling season of another kind for many Air Force families — a permanent change of station.

And for those families who've received orders to military installations in the continental United States or other overseas areas, getting ready now can mean a less stressful move in the peak PCS months of June through August, according to traffic management office officials.

The first step after getting your orders is a visit to TMO, according to SSgt. Tim Leonard, NCO in charge of the TMO personal property sub office.

"We really want people to come in as soon as they get their orders so we can get started working the dates for them," Leonard said. "We would prefer people (who have PCS orders in hand) to visit us rather than to call. We can provide better service that way."

The TMO sub office is located in Bldg. 1037 across the street from Donutland. Hours are 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays and 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. Wednesdays.

Anyone who needs immediate help, however, can call the office at Ext. 1849. Leonard warned against procrastination in contacting his office prior to a PCS.

"We get people who come in who've already had their orders for a month," Leonard said. "The first item listed on the back of their orders is

"Contact TMO immediately on receipt of these orders." Ideally, we would like to talk to them 30 days prior to the pick-up of their personal property. We do understand that orders don't always make it in the time frames that we would like."

Leonard strongly suggests anyone preparing for a move should attend the "PCS With Ease" program sponsored by the family support center.

"I think it's beneficial," Leonard said. "They offer a lot of good information."

"PCS With Ease" is usually offered the first Wednesday of every month according to Leonard. But, with the traffic-heavy PCS season approaching, family support has added extra briefings, he said. Subjects covered in this program include household claims, dealing with the stress of relocation and temporary lodging, among other things. For more information on this program, contact the family support center staff at Ext. 3847.

Shipping household goods

One of the most anxiety-filled activities of a PCS is the shipment of household goods. A little foresight and planning now can keep you from reaching for the antacids when moving day arrives. Some guidelines are:

- Ensure you're home between 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. on the day of the move. If you miss the movers, you can be charged for an attempted pick-up.
- Don't pack passports, birth certificates and other important documents with your household goods or unaccompanied baggage. Carry them with you.
- Don't ship valuable items or items with sentimental value. If you do ship valuable items such as jewelry, crystal, fine china, antique furniture, etc., have them professionally appraised before shipment. Members should contact the TMO staff prior to getting appraisal.
- Photograph or video tape your furniture and other valuables. This will serve as a visual record of the original condition of these items at the time of shipment in the case of theft or damage.
- Separate your belongings by shipment

Andrea (left) and Rosalyn Gillespie prepare for the movers by removing the pedals on their bicycles.



Photo by SSgt. Steve Ball



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Make sure descriptions

your inventory before signing. Ensure all items in boxes and all items not placed in boxes are listed on the form.

Make sure descriptions of major household items are complete and accurate. For example, if the packer lists "color TV," have them document the serial number, size, make and model.

Before you sign the description inventory, make sure you completely understand and agree with all descriptive, exception and location symbols. Make sure you receive a legible copy of everything signed. Never sign a blank or incomplete form, or a form you don't understand clearly.

"Once you sign the paper work and the movers leave, we're very limited in what we can do," Leonard stressed. "It's easiest to deal with the problem while it's there and not later."

Above all, Leonard emphasized the importance of not arguing with the carrier's representative. If a problem arises, said Leonard, immediately contact TMO's quality control office at (01638) 542510.

"It's important you contact the quality control section while the carrier is still there — while the problem is being addressed," he said. "If there is a problem, call the quality control section and they will get an inspector out there. If they can't get an inspector out there, they will at least talk to the carrier agent over the phone."

Getting ready for a PCS can be an experience in high anxiety. The important thing is to start planning now according to Leonard.

"The most important thing is to be proactive — don't wait," the sergeant stressed. "And if you're not sure of something, ask us."

before the movers arrive. This way, household goods won't be accidentally shipped with unaccompanied baggage. Put items you don't want shipped in a locked room.

Make sure inventory stickers from previous moves are removed from furniture and other items.

One of the most important documents in a PCS is the description inventory of household items being shipped. Take care in ensuring all proper information is included on this form. Some of the guidelines to follow regarding inventory of household goods are:

- Carefully read providing an old DD 788, a bill of sale from the dealership, old registration or title, or letter of authority to ship an approved replacement privately owned vehicle.
- Anyone shipping a POV is required to have their vehicle meet certain standards before shipping. General guidelines for POV processing are:
 - The POV must be in a safe operating condition.
 - The POV's interior and exterior should be clean.
 - Empty the glove compartment.
 - Have one complete set of keys for all locks.
 - Have available the make, model, year and serial number of POV.
 - Be ready to provide the vehicle processing center staff with an address at your next duty station.
 - Remove items such as flares, oil, wax, paint, solvents and polishes from POV's.

Some items that can be left in POV's are vehicular tools such as jacks, tire irons and chains, fire extinguishers, jumper cables and hand tools including wrenches, pliers, screwdrivers, etc.

A terminal inspector will then conduct a joint POV inspection with you. After the inspection both parties sign the DD Form 788, Private Vehicle Shipping Document. You will get a copy of this form as a receipt. Carry this copy with you to your new duty station. This form will be needed if you wish to file a claim because of loss or damage during shipping.



Photo by SSgt. Steve Ball

Will Gillespie III scrubs the tires on his family's car prior to shipment.

Tips for shipping your POV

Another area of concern regarding the permanent change of station move is the shipping of a privately owned vehicle and procedures have changed regarding the shipment of POV's.

Now military members are required to fill out an application worksheet prior to POV shipment. The vehicle processing center in Ipswich now requires exporting vehicle owners to contact them for an appointment for POV shipping. To make an appointment, call the vehicle processing center at (01473) 242133, 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. weekdays.

When people arrive at the port, they should have with them:

- Six copies of their PCS orders with amendments if issued.
- A valid identification card.
- A 3rd Air Force Form 430, the pink vehicle registration form.
- A power of attorney if anyone other than you or your spouse is turning in your POV for shipment or picking up the vehicle.
- Copy of DD Form 1131 or DD Form 139 for POV shipments made at excess cost. An example of this would be shipment of a POV to an alternate port, or a shipment of an oversized vehicle.
- If the POV's vehicle identification number doesn't begin with a "1" or a "4," the vehicle is considered to be of foreign manufacture. In this case, you are required to show proof the POV was in the United States at one time. This can be done by

providing an old DD 788, a bill of sale from the dealership, old registration or title, or letter of authority to ship an approved replacement privately owned vehicle.

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Countdown to moving day

As soon as people receive orders

- Visit the traffic management office at Bldg. 1037 (across the street from Donutland) and schedule a counseling session.
- Begin arrangements for shipping the family pet.
- Homeowners begin preparations to sell or rent home.
- Renters notify landlord as required by lease.
- Government housing occupants visit the housing office in Bldg. 965 to schedule pre-move and final housing inspections. Call Ext. 1840 for information.
- Make reservations at the billeting office by calling Ext. 6713
- Plan to attend the next "PCS With Ease" class at the family support center. Anyone with questions can call family support at Ext. 3847.

3 weeks before the move

- Inform British Telecom to disconnect service.
- Inform cable television company about disconnecting service.
- Haul castaways to local thrift shop or charitable organizations.
- Notify schools. Arrange pick up of records.
- Ensure family members are properly listed on DEERS and enrolled in the Dependents Dental Plan. Call the military personnel flight at Ext. 1845 for details.

2 weeks before the move

- Begin separating items for household goods shipment or unaccompanied baggage shipment. Separate items to hand carry.
- Inform electricity and gas boards about disconnecting service.
- Return library books and other borrowed items.
- Retrieve all loaned-out items.
- Have drapes, curtains and rugs cleaned.
- Separate professional books, papers and equipment. These items will be weighed and listed separately on shipping inventory.

1 week before the move

- Pull out items from beneath stairways, from attics or other areas that don't allow full standing room.
- Remove all accessories such as drapery rods, small appliances, food and utensil racks.
- Disassemble electronic components and place them in original packing boxes if available.
- Drain oil and gas from lawn mower and other equipment.
- Thoroughly clean barbecue grill.
- Make child-care arrangements for moving day.
- Get a "no claims" letter from your local insurance agent. This may save you money when applying for insurance in the United States.

Moving day

- Make sure cash, jewelry, important documents and other valuable items are secure. Lock them in your car.
- Ensure conditions of belongings are accurately noted on the inventory. If anything marked "scratched," "dented" or "soiled," also note location of such.
- Call the TMO staff at Ext. 1849 if problems or questions arise.

PCS with Ease

The next "PCS with Ease" briefing is 1 p.m. April 2 in the family support center. For more information, contact the family support center staff at Ext. 3847.



Photo by SSgt. Steve Ball

Paul Hughes, a contracted mover, prepares to pack up a crate.

Before you leave

Before leaving the United Kingdom, certain British agencies will need to be contacted to cancel various services. These services include:

- Rental agreement. Check your contract to see how much notice a landlord or rental agency require. Most of them ask for 30-days notice to advertise the property.
- Utility companies. Contact all utilities companies (electric, gas, water, telephone, etc.) to inquire about moving notification and billing procedures.
- Credit cards. If you have British store or company credit cards, contact them as soon as you know your moving date so you can arrange final payment and cancellation of your account.
- Bank. If you have a British bank account, close it and be sure to cancel standing orders for any regular bills you pay.
- Subscriptions. Change your address for continued payment, or cancel subscriptions in book and record clubs, mail order companies, periodicals, etc.
- British schools. If your children attend a British school, contact the headmaster as soon as you know your departure date. This will ensure the appropriate records are available to you if you wish to transfer them to the next school.
- Dry cleaners. Make sure you don't leave any clothing items at the local dry cleaners.